



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Connecticut Department of Agriculture Seizes 11 Horses

Hartford, CT – Today state Department of Agriculture animal control officers, with the assistance of the Meriden police and Meriden animal control, seized 11 horses from at two locations in the Town of Meriden. Horses were seized at 707 Hanover Street and 705 Westfield Road. Ten mature horses and one mature miniature horse were seized, five rabbits, three dogs, two cats, two goats and a duck. Nine horses were owned by Maureen Kenny and two were owned by a Bill O'Brien.

The investigation, which began August 19, 2010, was prompted by a complaint from a citizen concerned about the welfare and condition of the animals. State animal control officers conducting the investigation concluded that due to the physical condition of the animals, lack of veterinary care, poor quality feed, and the inability of the owners of these animals to correct these conditions, it was necessary to remove the animals from the property. State animal control officers sought and obtained a search and seizure warrant allowing them to remove the animals.

During the investigation the department received several additional complaints. Investigating officers learned that the animals had not received adequate veterinary care or sufficient feed, and that the feed being supplied to the animals was of poor quality. The animals were found to be grossly underweight and were not receiving proper care for hoof and medical problems.

All the of seized horses were transported to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's large animal rescue facility, Second Chance, located at the Gates Correctional Institution in Niantic. They are

being examined by a veterinarian and will be housed there under the care of Connecticut Department of Agriculture staff with assistance from prison inmates who participate in work programs at the barn. The cats, dogs, rabbits and duck will be cared for at local municipal animal shelters.

This is an ongoing investigation and state animal control officers are working with the Attorney General's office and may pursue criminal animal cruelty charges with the State Attorney.

Connecticut Department of Agriculture Commissioner Steven K. Reviczky said, "The vast majority of horse and livestock owners are very responsible and take good care of their animals. However, when the department becomes aware of this type of situation, we enforce the law and take action to protect animals."

The animals will not be available for adoption until they are fully recovered. As required by law, the department offers rehabilitated animals to the public by auction. Proceeds from the auction are used to fund the care these animals need, but fall far short of what is necessary. Monetary donations to help offset the costs of rehabilitation are allowed by sending a check to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture and designating the money for the Animal Abuse Cost Recovery.

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